



## **BULLETIN #139/2020 DECEMBER 14, 2020**

### **CORONAVIRUS UPDATE**

#### **BOSTON AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES ROLLING BACK RE-OPENING STANDARDS, ISSUING STRICTER SHUTDOWN REQUIREMENTS**

Last week Governor Charlie Baker, reacting to higher COVID-19 infections, hospitalizations, and deaths, rolled back the state's re-opening standards to Phase 3, Step 1. The rollback took effect Sunday, December 13. We covered the governor's new order in Bulletin #136 (December 9, 2020).

Today Boston and its neighbors took it backwards one step further. Boston Mayor Marty Walsh joined his colleagues in several surrounding communities to roll back their re-opening standards to a modified format of the state's Phase 2, Step 2, which will take effect on Wednesday, December 16.

Over the next three weeks, communications at the state and municipal levels will signal in which direction we will be heading with the re-opening standards after the holidays and the start of the new year. The incoming new presidential administration has already signaled its desire for more stringent federal restrictions beginning January 20. Paying attention to the politicians' statements will enlighten us as to if and when there is an end game to all this, as the Trump Administration this week commences a nationwide vaccination plan. Stay tuned.

#### **Seven Boston-Area Communities to Close Gyms, Theaters, and More**

[Courtesy of *Boston Business Journal*]

City officials in Boston and some surrounding communities are issuing Coronavirus-driven restrictions in a move that goes further than the statewide ones recommended by Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker.

Mayor Marty Walsh said Boston is joining with Newton, Lynn, Somerville, Brockton, Winthrop, and Arlington in rolling back to a "modified" Phase 2, Step 2 of an economic reopening. Baker last week said the state is moving back to Phase 3, Step 1 as hospitalizations surged.

The regional restrictions go into effect Wednesday, December 16, according to the Walsh administration. They will be in place for at least three weeks.

"This is an effort to reduce overall activity outside the home, using the mechanisms afforded by the phases of the state reopening plan," Walsh said on Twitter. "In fact, we want to minimize the negative impact on working people and small businesses "



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Indoor dining and restaurants and bars can continue, Walsh added.

But museums, movie theaters, aquariums and indoor event spaces will temporarily close to in-person use, according to Walsh. Same with fitness centers, health clubs, and gyms.

Other restrictions include:

- Indoor recreational and athletic facilities will close for general use;
- Bowling alleys, batting cages, driving ranges, and rock climbing gyms will also close; and
- Office space remains limited to 40% capacity.

The following activities and businesses can continue, per Walsh: Retail stores and personal services like hair salons and barber, and outdoor theaters and performance venues at the 25-person limit.

Movie, television and streaming productions can also continue to operate in Boston and the other cities.

Under Baker's statewide measures, which [went into effect Sunday](#), indoor theaters and performance venues were shut down, as were roller skating rinks, trampoline parks, obstacle courses, and laser tag and escape room venues. Restaurants face the maximum table size will be six people, down from 10, and dining is limited to 90 minutes. Baker has also allowed gyms, museums, arcades, retailers, offices, and other businesses to still operate, but with capacity to 40% of the maximum, down from 50%.

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